

BOOK REVIEWS

OWNBEY, GERALD B. and THOMAS MORLEY. 1991. **Vascular Plants of Minnesota. A Checklist and Atlas.** University of Minnesota Press, 2037 University Avenue Southeast, Minneapolis, MN 55414. Hardbound \$39.95 (+\$3.00 shipping). 308 pp.

Among publications most useful in the preparation of overall range maps for various species (as mandated, for example, for *Flora of North America*) are state floristic atlases. Since 1980 such works have appeared for Georgia, Louisiana, Utah, and Virginia. Now Minnesota joins this select group.

Minnesota's vascular flora includes 1618 native and 392 introduced species. Like many states, Minnesota can claim to be a meeting ground of broad vegetation types, in this case the prairie and the eastern forest ("conifer zone" and "hardwood forest strip"). (A map of Minnesota vegetation is on page xi.) In the atlas, the Minnesota range of each vascular plant species is shown by a dot in each county of occurrence. Preceding the 209 pages of maps (nine per page; page size 21 × 27.5 cm) is a "Checklist of the vascular plants of Minnesota." Making the list especially useful is the inclusion of literature references under many genera.

Long-time faculty members at the University of Minnesota, Drs. Ownbey and Morley based their atlas on the ca. 97,000 Minnesota specimens in the University of Minnesota Herbarium (MIN) at St. Paul (and "in a few instances, on specimens at other institutions"). Their work will be much consulted both within and outside of their state. *John W. Thieret.*

SHULTES, RICHARD E. and ROBERT F. RAFFAUF. 1990. **The Healing Forest: Medicinal and Toxic Plants of Northwest Amazonia.** Dioscorides Press, 9999 SW Wilshire, Portland, Oregon, Price Unknown, 484 pp.

This book, dedicated to the Indians who shared their knowledge of medicinal plants with the authors, is an exquisite and valuable text dealing with the toxic and medicinal plants of the northwest Amazon. The authors, understanding that many readers would not be pure ethnobotanists or taxonomic botanists, have arranged and discussed selected plants in a very user-friendly way. Plant families are arranged alphabetically without regard to phylogenetic relationships. Genera within families and species within genera are similarly arranged.

A full citation of the place and date of publication of each binomial is provided. Generally, synonyms are not given and, in some cases, older more well known binomials are retained in place of some recently changed unfamiliar names. Indigenous names of plants are provided with their tribal identifications. These aboriginal names collected by the authors are written in a simple orthography and a pronunciation key is provided.

A brief introduction describing the geographic range, general chemical constituency (when known), and medicinal uses is provided for each genera. Additionally, specific medical or toxin applications are presented for each species discussed.

Of the 1516 species (in 145 families and 594 genera) listed in this book, at least 50% have had little or no investigation. This book collectively represents nearly half a century of field research by the authors. The text clearly meets its stated goals of emphasizing the importance of ethnobotanical conservation and focusing attention on the biochemicals of this region that may have value to modern medicine and industry. *Joe Kuban.*